



S O M E
R E M A R K S
U P O N A
S E R M O N

ENTITULED

No acceptance with God by faith only,

Preached before the Univerfity of Oxford,

On SUNDAY July 19, 1761.



THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

OF THE

REMARKS

UPON A

SERMON

ENTITLED

No acquaintance with God by faith only

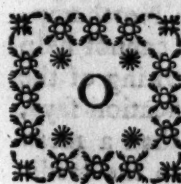
Preached before the University of Chicago

ON SUNDAY 17th APRIL 1893

BY THE REV. J. ALLEN



Some REMARKS, &c.

UR author takes his text from James ii. 14. Can faith save him ?

The whole verse runs thus.

What doth it profit, my brethren, tho' a man says he hath faith and have not works, can faith save him ;

The sermon begins as follows,

“ One design of this epistle is to confute
“ a notion which some mistaken converts
“ to christianity had unhappily imbibed from
“ St. Paul's doctrine concerning faith, as if
“ he had taught that *that*, and that alone
“ would convert and justify the disciples of
“ Jesus.”

If by this Mr. Allen means to assert that the apostle James is confuting that monstrous and diabolical doctrine, that a meer speculative assent to the gospel truths, that a dead unoperative faith can justify, he is
most

most certainly in the right, nor can we in too strong terms bear testimony against so dangerous a delusion; * but if he would insinuate (as plainly appears to be the case) that a lively operative faith, a faith which is *the gift of God*, and the work of his Spirit in the heart, cannot justify, why then he evidently makes the two apostles contradict each

* I find a paragraph in a visitation sermon by the reverend Mr. Hartley, rector of Winnick in Northamptonshire so very apposite to my purpose that I cannot help transcribing it. This truly pious divine speaking of the disputes which have arisen concerning justification says,
 “ If indeed no more was meant by faith, than a mere
 “ historical faith, a bare assent of the mind to the credi-
 “ bility of things (in the language of the schools) as far
 “ forth as credible; a belief of something extorted by
 “ dint of argument, rising no higher than moral evidence
 “ can force it, and sinking again under the objections
 “ of every subtle disputant; if this be all that is meant
 “ by gospel faith, it would indeed be matter of wonder,
 “ if such a faith could justify: if this were a saving
 “ faith, I should think the very devils capable of salva-
 “ tion: but surely we do not mean that this is the faith
 “ of which St. Paul speaks so many great and glorious
 “ things; that faith by which the saints of old *subdued*
 “ *kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the*
 “ *mouths of lions*, and did so many other marvellous works:
 “ it cannot be said, that such is the faith defined by the
 “ same apostle to be *the substance of things hoped for, the*
 “ *evidence of things not seen*; putting us into a kind of
 “ present possession of the promises, and setting divine
 “ truths before the mind in all the light and power of
 “ demonstration: it cannot I am sure with any truth or
 “ propriety be so said of it: the faith then that we con-
 “ tend for as truly christian and justifying does not arise
 “ from historical evidence only; much less does it consist
 “ in forced speculations, or the uncertain conclusions of
 “ human reason; but is of higher extraction, *even the gift*
 “ *of God*; it is a seed of the divine life in the soul, growing
 “ up

each other, and St. James instead of confuting *a mistaken notion*, will be found to be confuting the assertions of his brother Paul ; for whether or no it be a mistaken notion to believe that St. Paul taught, that faith alone would justify, let his own words declare.—*

In the third chapter to the Romans, this apostle having largely opened the corruption and depravity of human nature, and shewn the absolute impossibility we are all under of being justified by the law, which upon the first

“ up in a gradual approach towards perfection, and
 “ bringing forth the fruits of the spirit ; *a faith working*
 “ *by love*, producing obedience to all God’s commands,
 “ and abounding in good works, according to that measure of abilities which God hath given us : it is a
 “ power from on high, at once enlightening and converting the soul ; it is that victory whereby we overcome
 “ the world : and to sum up all in this emphatical
 “ conclusion, it is hereby that Christ becomes *Immanuel*,
 “ *or God with us* ; and is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption.

Hartley’s Sermons.

* When the scripture and our church affirm that we are justified by faith only they do not mean, that the grace of faith in us justifieth, but that faith is as it were the hand by which we receive Christ, and by which his merits are applied to our justification. To this effect archbishop Usher, “ Faith (in the point of justification) “ is an instrument whereby my justification is wrought, “ an instrument whereby Christ is received. We must “ know that in point of receiving we all live on God’s “ alms ; all our justification is his free gift, and faith is “ that palsy hand which receives all our comfort.”— But Mr. Allen in his postscript denies faith to be the instrumental cause or indeed any cause at all of our justification, tho’ I should be glad to know how he would prove that to be no cause without which an effect cannot be produced.

first and least offence denounces a curse upon the transgressor, adds, *But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe, for there is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace thro' the redemption that is in Jesus Christ: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare I say at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what laws; of works? nay, but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also; seeing it is one God which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision thro' faith.—Again in the next chapter, Now to him that worketh, is the reward not reckoned of grace but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace, and if by grace, then it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace.—So also in the fifth*

adopted children by faith in Jesus Christ, why then they must be pardoned, justified persons, and your talking of the necessity of their performing evangelical works as conditions of the forgiveness of their sins, and their acceptance with God, (as you do not only in this place, but throughout your whole sermon) is entirely to overthrow your own argument, and to require conditions of pardon and justification, from such as are pardoned and justified already. But if you still say, no, they are not pardoned, not justified; why then I answer, that it is most certain that they are yet under the curse of the law, and so far from being able to perform *works of evangelical obedience, works which are the fruits of faith, and done in the strength of the spirit of life*, that this spirit of life and grace is not in them, and instead of having Christ to dwell in their hearts by faith, the wrath of God abideth on them. And if our church be in the right (art. 13) all their works have in them the nature of sin, and how can that which has in it the nature of sin be a condition of justification. — To this purpose permit me to add a word or two from Bp. Beveridge's private thoughts.

“ It is matter of admiration to me (saith
 “ that excellent prelate) how any one that
 “ pretends to the use of his reason, can
 “ imagine that he should be accepted be-

" fore God for what comes from himself :
 " for how is it possible that I should be justi-
 " fied by good works, when I can do no
 " good work at all before I be first justified ?
 " my works cannot be accepted as good till
 " my person be so ; nor can my person be
 " accepted by God, till first ingrafted into
 " Christ ; before which ingrafting into the
 " true vine, it is impossible I should bring
 " forth good fruit."

But Mr. Allen speaks of the necessity of works to justify the disciples of Jesus,* which I believe is what the rankest papist will hardly bear him countenance in ; for they indeed insist on the necessity of works in order that we may become the disciples of Jesus ; but that a man may be a disciple of Jesus, and yet remain in an unjustified state, is what Bellarmine himself would scarcely have affirmed. St. Paul indeed speaks of *justifying the ungodly*, and *of sinners and enemies being freely justified by the blood of Christ*, that they may become his obedient disciples ; but to become his disciples first, and be justified af-

* How does this agree with our author's notion of justification taking place in baptism, which in his curious postscript he has inserted a clause into our 12th article to prove ? Though here, and all throughout his sermon he says works must go before justification. In order to make him consistent with himself, we must suppose him an anabaptist, or else that he would have all infants do good works before they are baptized.

If justification be conferr'd in baptism what a multitude of justified regenerated, drunkards, swearers, and sabbath-breakers does our land abound with.

terwards, is such doctrine as perhaps never had existence till delivered by Mr. Vice Principal from the university pulpit. St. Paul in his epistles to those disciples who were newly converted to the christian faith, never tells them, that after they have done so many good works they shall be justified; but all along writes to them as persons that really were justified, *Being justified by faith we have peace with God*, Rom. v. 1. *Ye are justified*, 1 Cor. vi. 11. *Being justified freely by his grace thro' the redemption that is in Jesus Christ*, Rom. iii. 24. *Much more being now justified by his blood*, Rom. v. 9. *I write unto you little children because your sins ARE forgiven you for his namesake*, 1 John iii. 12. See also Col. ii. 13. and Eph. iv. 32. What previous conditions of acceptance could any of these converts have fulfilled, who were but just brought out of the darkness of Paganism, more than the sick of the palsy, the woman that was a sinner, or the blind man that sat by the wayside begging; and yet to none of these our Saviour saith, you must do good works in order to be healed or saved, but *go thy way, thy faith hath saved thee; be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee; according to thy faith, be it unto thee*. Now who can suppose that these wonderful instances of our Saviour's free grace and love would incline the persons thus healed, forgiven, justified, to trample his mercy under foot, and to go on in a course of rebellion? On the contrary,

would not these mercies excite them to live henceforth to the glory of him who had done such great things for them ? * And I appeal to the heart of every real christian, whether there is or can be a more powerful motive to universal holiness, and the practice of every good work, than the sense of God's having *freely forgiven us all trespasses* for Christ's sake, without requiring any previous terms or conditions on our parts, which whoever thinks to bring, must expect to be rejected with much such an answer as St. Peter gave to Simon Magus, Acts viii. 20. when he thought the gift of the Holy Ghost was to be purchased with money. Gospel- blessings must be received as a free gift, *without money and without price*, and to talk of annexing conditions to a free gift is downright nonsense. We find throughout the whole book of God that the tenders of salvation are never made to such as fancy they are to stand upon terms with God, and to bring conditions of accep-

* " It is a childish cavil (saith the learned Hooker in
 " a treatise on justification) our adversaries so greatly
 " please themselves with, exclaiming that we tread
 " all christian virtues under our feet ; because we teach
 " that *faith alone justifieth*. Whereas by this speech we
 " never meant to exclude either hope or charity from
 " being always joined as inseperable mates with faith
 " in the man that is justified ; or works from being
 " added as necessary duties required of every justified
 " man : but to shew that faith is the only hand which
 " putteth on Christ to justification ; and Christ the
 " only garment, which being so put on covereth the
 " shame of our defiled natures, hideth the imperfection
 " of our works, and preserveth us blameless in the sight
 " of God."

tance, but to those and those only who are deeply convinced of the spiritual maladies of their souls, and that they can bring nothing but sin and misery. *Come unto me all ye that are weary and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. The whole need not a physician, but those that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised.*

But to return to Mr. Allen's sermon.

“ But how unequal faith alone is to that effect appears from this chapter particularly, in which St. James insisteth on the necessity of good works as a condition of justification.”

A bold assertion this, that *faith alone is unequal to justification*, for one who professeth himself a minister of the church of England, and who has solemnly subscribed to the 11th article of that church, which affirms that we are justified BY FAITH ONLY. But the assertion is much bolder against St. James, who is charged with insisting on the necessity of good works as conditions of justification, which he insists on as the fruits, evidences, and testimonials of lively faith, *Shew me thy faith by thy works. Faith without works is*

dead. So that the justification mentioned by that apostle must mean a declarative justification, as is very evident from the case of Abraham there cited, who is expressly said by St. Paul (Rom. iii.) to be justified by faith, many years before he wrought those works mentioned by St. James.* But Mr. Vice Principal affirms, that this interpretation is given by such *as do not like this epistle of St. James.* Whether this malicious sneer be levelled at our pious reformers, I will not take upon me to determine, but that this is expressly the sense in which they understood the justification spoke of by St. James is plain beyond dispute, where quoting the very chapter in

* To illustrate this by a familiar example.—In a court of judicature, the only way of knowing whether a person be innocent or guilty, is by examining the evidences, tho' these evidences do not contribute either to his guilt or innocence, but are the vouchers of the one or the other, by which a verdict must be given and sentence passed.—So it is in the present case. Justification is a forensic term. Man is the prisoner arraigned, and tho' works have no more hand in his justification, than witnesses at a trial have in constituting the person tried, either guilty or not guilty, yet are they the best evidences and vouchers to prove him in a justified state.—If it be objected that we cannot tell whether these works proceed from an heart renewed by grace, and whether they are the fruits of justifying faith or not. I answer though we can no more know this than we can know whether the evidences in a court of justice speak in truth and sincerity or not, and though many persons who are very religious in their own eyes and the eyes of the world may nevertheless be deceiving their own souls, yet wherever there seems to be a single desire of pleasing God in the heart, and a total change of life and conversation, we are as much in charity bound to judge on the favourable side as we are to believe that the witnesses at a trial do speak *the truth and nothing but the truth.*

question (Jam. ii.) they say, *Deeds and works must be an open testimonial of faith.* And again, *Let us do good works and thereby declare our faith to be the lively christian faith.* (third part of the sermon on faith.) So also in the 12th article we are told, that a lively faith may be as evidently known by good works, as a tree discerned by its fruit. We see then that our church in perfect harmony with St. James, and in direct contradiction to Mr. Vice Principal affirms, that good works are the fruits and declarative evidences of true faith, and so far from stiling them conditions with our new-fangled teachers she maintains, that all works done before justification have in them the nature of sin, (see art. 13.)

But altho' our church has taken such special care to guard against licentiousness, and the blasphemous tenets of the Antinomians (which appear by the excellent epistle of St. James to have crept very early into the visible church) by insisting strongly on good works as the fruits of justifying faith; yet when speaking of our justification and acceptance with God, how does she disclaim all works whatever as conditions or qualifications, as we may read in the homily of salvation, where it is written, "In these foresaid places the apostle toucheth specially three things, which must go together in our justification. Upon God's part, his great mercy and grace. Upon Christ's part, justice, that is the satisf-

“faction of God’s justice, or the price of our
 “redemption by the offering of his body
 “and shedding of his blood, with fulfilling
 “of the law perfectly and thoroughly ; and
 “upon our part, true and lively faith in the
 “merits of Jesus Christ, which yet is not
 “ours, but by God’s working in us.” (Me-
 thinks here is no mention of works as condi-
 tions of justification, which as plain as words
 can make it, is attributed only to faith, and
 even that faith, not our own, but God’s work-
 ing in us.) So also in the third part of the
 homily of salvation, we read, “ And foras-
 much as it is all one sentence in effect to say,
 faith without works, and only faith doth
 justify us ; therefore the old antient fathers of
 the church from time to time have uttered
 our justification with this speech ONLY FAITH
 JUSTIFIETH US, meaning no other thing than
 St. Paul meant, when he said, Faith without
 works justifieth us.” (And in another place)
 “The sum of all Paul’s disputation is this,
 that if justice come of works, then it cometh
 not of grace ; and if it come of grace, then
 it cometh not of works. And to this end
 tend all the prophets, as St. Peter saith in the
 tenth of the Acts, Of Christ all the prophets
 do witness, that thro’ his name, all they that
 believe in him, shall receive the remission of
 sins. And after this wise to be justified only by
 this true and lively faith in Christ, speak all
 the old and antient authors, both Greeks and
 Latins ; of whom I will specially rehearse

three, Hilary, Basil, and Ambrose. St. Hilary saith these words plainly in the ninth canon upon Matthew, FAITH ONLY JUSTIFIETH. And St. Basil a Greek author writeth thus; This is a perfect and whole rejoicing in God when a man advanceth not himself for his own righteousness, but acknowledgeth himself to lack true justice and righteousness, and TO BE JUSTIFIED BY THE ONLY FAITH IN CHRIST. And Paul (saith he) doth glory in the contempt of his own righteousness, and that he looketh for the righteousness of God by faith. These be the very words of St. Basil. And St. Ambrose a Latin author saith these words, This is the ordinance of God, that they which believe in Christ, should be saved without works, BY FAITH ONLY, freely receiving remission of their sins. Consider diligently these words, WITHOUT WORKS, by FAITH ONLY, FREELY WE RECEIVE REMISSION OF OUR SINS. What can be spoken more plainly than to say, that freely without works, by faith only we obtain remission of our sins. These and other like sentences that we be justified by faith only, freely and without works, we do read oftentimes in the best and most antient writers. As beside Hilary, Basil and St. Ambrose before rehearsed, we read the same in Origen, St. Chrysostom, St. Cyprian, St. Augustine, Prosper, Oecumenius, Proclus, Bernardus, Anselm, and many other authors Greek and Latin." (Thus far our homily.)

To this testimony of our homilies, and of the venerable fathers therein mentioned, I might add that of the reformed churches, all of which in their confessions do maintain the doctrine of justification by faith only, as the grand basis of all true religion; but this to avoid prolixity I shall not do. I might also add the united voices of many other christians who shone with the most distinguished lustre in the primitive ages of the church, as one star differeth from another star in glory; but this I shall likewise forbear, there being already so many of them quoted in the extract I have made from the homily. However I refer the reader to the learned and pious Bp. Beveridge's exposition of the 11th article of our church, where he will find the doctrine of justification by faith only proved from scripture, reason and fathers; all of which bear their testimony against Mr. Vice Principal.

Our author having affirmed, that St. James insisteth on good works as conditions of justification, begins to beware of the glaring contradiction he is making between that apostle and St. Paul, who declares *we are justified by faith without works*, to obviate which as well as he can, he calls the faith mentioned by St. Paul *A complex faith, or faith formed by charity*; by which expressions, if he means any thing, he means either to put charity or love (for so the word *ἀγάπη* signifies) before faith, which the scripture makes subsequent thereto (1 Cor. xiii. 13.) or else to mix and blend

them together, making what good old Bp. Latimer calls a *mingle mangle* of law and gospel. But I think the matter would not have been so much muddled in the clearing, as it has been by others as well as by Mr. Vice Principal, if we would consider that St. Paul affirms that we are justified by a lively operative faith, which St. James no where denies; and that St. James denies we can be justified by a dead inactive faith, which St. Paul no where affirms.

Our author begins his fifth page with a truly christian paragraph; his words are these,

“To speak with strictness and propriety, this justified patriarch (Abraham) was *pronounced righteous* on account of the merits of neither faith nor works, for neither is the one nor the other *meritorious*, but of that Lamb who was slain from the foundation of the world, whose day, whose incarnation, this friend of God saw at a distance, and exulted at the prospect of an era when all flesh should see the salvation of God.”

But alas! this evangelical strain does not long continue, for before he is got to the end of the page, he begins talking of his *terms and conditions* again, and of *our being embraced as righteous on account of our sincere repentance, and love unfeigned*, without one word mentioned of Christ's merits. He then proceeds to what he and the papists call *The law of the gospel*, by which he tells us, *we are to be tried, and acquitted or condemned, according as we have conformed to, or deviated from that standard*. So that according to Mr. Allen Christ instead of being *the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth*,

Rom. x. iv. and *a redeemer from its curse*, Gal. iii. 13. is a kind of new law-giver, who proposes to us milder terms of obedience than Moses did, to which terms if we submit God will take us into his favour. As this conceit is destructive of the whole scheme of redemption, so is it exceedingly pleasing to the pride of every natural man, who rather than stoop to be justified as a poor helpless sinner, and accept of Christ as an intire Saviour, is ever for setting up something of his own to recommend him to God, tho' in words perhaps he will deny that he means any such thing.—Instead of controverting this point any farther I refer the reader to Dr. Fulke against the papists, and to an excellent pamphlet lately published by Fuller, entituled Annotations on a sermon preached before the university of Oxford on Sunday June 7, 1761.

Our author in the 8th page opens to us the design of his sermon in the following words,

“ I intend in the remainder of this discourse to prove the following proposition, that faith in its highest degree when alone, or distinct from other virtues, is so far from saving or justifying any person, that it doth not necessarily produce good works.”—That is, “ I intend to prove that a barren faith doth not produce good works.” Herein we are agreed. But you might as well have said “ I intend to prove that two and two make four.”—Oh, but you will say you mean *faith in its highest degree*. Be it so. Then you do not mean a barren, but a lively faith, for one or other you must mean, and certainly *faith in its highest degree*, and a lively faith are syno-

nimous terms. This being the case, your design in other words might have stood as follows.—

“I intend in the remainder of this discourse to prove, that the 12th article of the church of England, to which I have subscribed, and which declares, that good works are the fruits of faith, is false and unscriptural,” — and this you say, you “the more willingly undertake, because it is the leading tenet of modern enthusiasm, that any one by suddenly believing that Jesus Christ shed his blood for his sins is instantaneously regenerated and justified; or to use their very language, Only believe, and you are saved.”

Tremble O earth, and be astonished O heavens at such outrageous execrable blasphemy! Here is not only the language, but as near as possible the very words of our Saviour and of St. Paul treated as “the leading tenet of modern enthusiasm.” Our blessed Lord saith, *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.* John iii. 36. *He that believeth shall be saved.* Mar. xvi. 16. *Thy faith hath saved thee.* Luke vii. 50. And again, *Verily, verily I say unto you, he that beareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me hath everlasting life,** John v. 24.

* Bishop Beveridge in speaking of this passage in one of his sermons, gives the following explanation of it. “At our new birth, when a man is truly regenerated or born again of God, and made his child by adoption and grace; then the Holy Spirit of God is breathed into him, and becomes the principle of eternal life in him. By which means he shall not only have it hereafter, but he already hath everlasting life. He is already passed from death to life, and so hath not only a right and title to it, but he hath eternal life abiding in him, 1 John iii. 15. The seeds of it are already sown in his heart, which grow up insensibly till they bring forth fruit to perfection.”

St. Paul's answer to the trembling jailor when he asked What he should do to be saved? was not—
 Do good works as conditions of your justification;
 but *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved*, Acts xvi. 31. The same apostle says Eph. ii. 8. *By grace are ye saved thro' faith*. And again, Tit. iii. 5, 6, 7. *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly thro' Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*

Our author having laid before us his intentions, proceeds to speak of the nature of faith which he divides into three acts of it. Knowledge—assent—reliance. These he says, “may very well concenter in one person and that person continue ungodly, and unjustified.” He then goes on to shew that *The highest degree of knowledge is compatible with a very small or no degree of virtue*; in proof hereof he instances the order of the Jesuits, tho' by what follows one might have imagined he intended to prove them a company of ideots; for he affirms, “that their society was erected not only against the liberties and consciences, but *against the common sense of mankind.*” So that here he knocks himself down by his own argument, and we have Mr. Allen fighting against Mr. Vice Principal, and Mr. Vice Principal against Mr. Allen. And yet continues our preacher, “The world is under no small obligation to these men for most masterly defences of many

points of doctrine, as well as articles of faith, which we do and ought earnestly to contend for."

Among the jesuitical doctrines and articles of faith here meant, which Mr. Vice Principal says, "we do and ought earnestly to contend for," we may reasonably suppose to be that gross error of justification by works, and not by faith only, which is well known to have been earnestly contended for by Harding the Jesuit, against that sound pillar of the reformation, Bp. Jewel, long before Mr. Allen took up the cudgels on the popish side.—See Bp. Jewel's apology for the church of England, which is, or ought to be chained in all our parish churches.

To proceed. Our author having taken his leave of the Jesuits, and *their excellent articles of faith*, as he calls them, tells us, p. 11. "that if we come nearer home we may hear of a knowledge which the patrons of the election and reprobation doctrine pretend to," which doctrine he calls *an unauthorized and detestable scheme*. But Mr. Allen has solemnly set his hand to these doctrines when he subscribed to the 17th article of the church of England; Ergo Mr. Allen (for motives best known to himself) has subscribed to doctrines which he believes to be unauthorized and detestable. *

* Observe, I do not assert that God is the positive cause of the reprobation of the damned, I choose to style him with the judicious Hooker *the permissive cause* thereof. Tho' with regard to those who are saved, I believe that every step from their vocation to their glorification, is the work of God, and carried on by the agency of his Spirit on their souls, not compelling the will, but sweetly inclining it to comply with the drawings of grace, but this doctrine which so debases the creature, and magnifies the free, rich, and sovereign grace

Let us now take a view of Mr. Allens second act of faith viz. assent. In discoursing on which he endeavours to shew "that a bare assent without christian virtues will stand the professor in no stead;" and herein he certainly says very true; and who but a rank antinomian would ever suppose the contrary? so that the poor gentleman is beating the air till he is quite in a foam, and taking a vast deal of pains to confute what no body ever advanced. Besides which, he has been so very unfortunate as nearly to stumble upon the words of the prophet Isaiah, and to make them the language of a poor blinded enthusiast,—“The poor blinded enthusiast (saith Mr. Vice Principal) despises good works as rotten rags.”—The words of the prophet are, all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.

We come now to Mr. Allens last act of faith, viz. reliance. [I call it an act of faith because I have his own warrant for so doing; for p. 9. he says, “In treating of faith its nature will be best understood by considering the chief acts of it; and as the best divines have divided them into three, it will be safe to follow that distribution; they are knowledge, assent, reliance.” But here he changes his sentiments, leaves his *best divines* in the lurch, and declares that in the word of God we find not a syllable of any reliance being an act of justifying faith.]

of God, is in Mr. Allens opinion unauthorized and detestable. Consequently the Arminian heresy which soothes the pride of fallen man and derogates from the honour and glory of the Redeemer, is the scheme he approves and preaches.—But those things which the natural man often esteems *below contempt*, the christian sees to be *the wisdom of God in a mystery*.—The reason of this may be known. 1 Cor. ii. 14.

In treating of which he affirms, " that no one can be absolutely sure of his being justified before he hath performed every duty requisite to justification (which indeed would be the consequence of such performance.*)" And again, "No man can be sure from scripture that his sins are remitted, before he hath fulfilled the conditions required in the scriptures for such remission."

Here he is harping upon the same string : and instead of inviting guilty sinners to Christ to wash and be clean, is for having them come to him as righteous, clogging the gospel with conditional duties, and making the reward *not of grace, but of debt*. But the scripture is express.—*To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins, Acts x. 43.* So again, *Acts xiii. 38, 39. Be it known unto you men and brethren that thro' this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins : and by him all that believe are justified from all things. Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ : whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, thro' the forbearance of God ; to declare I say at this time his righteousness : that*

* Here Mr. Vice principal maintains the doctrine of absolute assurance, whereas p. 15, and 17. he treats it as a chimaera of dreamers and unlettered Enthusiasts. Ergo, Mr. Vice principal allows himself to be a "dreaming unlettered enthusiast."

he might be just and the justifier of him that believeth on Jesus. Rom. iii. 24, 25, 26.

In perfect conformity to these texts our own apostolical church in her communion service teaches us to pray “ that by the merits and death of Jesus Christ and thro’ faith in his blood, we and all the whole church may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion.” And when God works this *precious faith* in the soul, it will certainly shew itself in a new and holy life, *purifying the heart and conscience from dead works*, enabling us to *serve the living God* acceptably, and *transforming us into the image of him on whom we believed*: so that all Mr. Allen’s fine harangue about *an absolute and conditional reliance*, is nothing at all to the purpose, and his attempt to shew that many persons who live in sin, do yet pretend to be believers, proves this, and only this, that the faith of custom and education can never change the heart, nor make the possessor one jot the better.

Our author closes what he has to say on the third act of faith—*reliance*, with these words.

“ In truth the hope that maketh not ashamed, and on which we may safely lean, is the result of a good conscience; it is born of and acknowledges good works for its parent; so far is it from pretending to any thing without good works.”

Mr. Allen and I are entirely agreed on the necessity of good works, and both of us believe that *Christ is the author of eternal salvation only*

to those who obey him. But then herein consists the difference between us; I *poor, blinded enthusiast* do with the apostle and prophet count all *my own righteousness as dross, dung, and filthy rags, that I may win Christ, and be found in him*; and if I have in me the result of a good conscience, and am *begotten again to a lively hope*, it is only *thro' the blood of sprinkling, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead*, Heb. xii. 24. 1 Pet. i. 3. and having this hope in me, it is my daily endeavour thro' grace to purify myself and to abound in every good word and work, knowing that *without holiness no man shall see the Lord*, 1 John iii. 3. Heb. xii. 14.

Mr. Vice Principal on the contrary makes his good works and duties the conditions of his pardon and acceptance. It is from these he has the result of a good conscience; and *the hope of which he is not ashamed*, and on which he so *safely leans*, and founds his *pretensions*, has these good works for its parent without the least mention of the death and resurrection of the incarnate God.——

For my part, I heartily wish that those persons who make the greatest noise about good works would take care to shew them in their lives; but in general it is quite otherwise.—— However, we will charitably suppose the contrary of Mr. Vice Principal. We will suppose him more holy than St. Austin, St. Jerom, or

St. Cyprian, more temperate than John the baptist, who did never drink wine or strong drink. We will suppose that his knees (as recorded by Eusebius of St. James minor) are grown callous by the frequency of his prayers, and that his pallid visage, and emaciated body, declare his rigorous fastings to all the world ; yet surely in point of justification, or as terms and conditions thereof, all these things when *weighed in the ballance, must be found wanting.*

To proceed. Mr. Allen having summed up what he calls his proofs, and having again made Christ a new law-giver, gives a self satisfied exclamation of victory ; notwithstanding, which, he falls on afresh rank and file, till the poor man having exhausted both his spirits and ammunition declares he has had quite enough.

“ And now, brethren”—(says he) “ *And now*”—(that is)” after all the fine things I have been saying.” “ And now brethren what shall we think of the loud and repeated cries about a faith justifying the most hardened sinners in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye ? Of a faith which so justifies that the justified can fall no more ? Of a faith which consists in lolling, rolling, and recumbent upon Christ ? Of a faith, &c. &c.

Softly, softly, good dear Sir, for passion is really very prejudicial to the constitution. You have here advanced a vast deal in a very little compass, for great part of which we have no other

authority than your own assertion ; be pleased then to tell us who ever affirmed that there is no necessity of any holiness in ourselves in order to our salvation ? That works have neither part nor lot in the matter of justification is what no true christian will deny, for we are justified as *ungodly, freely, by faith only, without works* of any kind whatever, but that there is no need of a personal inherent holiness wrought in us by the Spirit of God as the consequence of our justification, is what no body but devils and antinomians will affirm, tho' by the word solifidian, as you have introduced it more than once, you would make us believe that all who hold the church of England doctrine of justification by faith only, must needs think an holy life quite unnecessary.

As to the wild notion as you seem to think it of "*Christs having obeyed the law and suffered for us,*" I shall make no other reply than to refer you to the homily of salvation, where we have these words, " Christ is now the righteousness of all them that truly do believe in him. He for them paid their ransom by death. He for them fulfilled the law in his life. So that now in him and by him every true christian may be called a fulfiller of the Law.

As to the terms rolling or recumbent, when applied to an act of faith, I confess I do not see any thing in them more absurd and ridiculous, and enthusiastic than in trusting or confiding, or than in Mr. Allens own word reliance, the

signification of which is certainly the very same with recumbence. And herein I have the concurrence of some of the most eminent divines of our church particularly of that mirrour of piety and learning, archbishop Leighton, who makes use of both these expressions in the same sentence. "The direct and proper act of faith (faith that excellent prelate) is of perpetual use and necessity, and then most when there is the least sense of assurance. And it is no other but a recumbency or reliance, rolling over the Soul upon free mercy. Leighton's works. Sermon. VI.

But there is more than human authority for the use of these phrases which give such offence to Mr. Vice Principal: for the word which our translation reads "*Commit*, commit thy way unto the Lord. Psa. xxxvii. 5. is in the original *roll* thy way upon the Lord. So also the Spouse in the canticle is represented as coming up from the wilderness leaning on her beloved, Cant. viii. 5. which I apprehend to be the same as recumbent, therefore think no man can display his wit against these expressions without making the word of God the object of his raillery.

"But what shall we say to a faith which justifies the most hardened sinners in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye? of a faith which so justifies, that the justified can fall no more?"

If one sinner can be justified in a moment, another may, even those that have been the most hardened ; and no sooner does God convince any soul of the iniquity of his heart and life, and dispose him to cast himself upon Christ for acceptance, than that soul is in a justified state ; tho' perhaps Mr. Allen would tell him he must wait half a year or three quarters of a year before God would pardon him, till he had laid up a good store of *terms*, and *conditions*, and *duties* ; and that God does not justify returning sinners in a moment, but by degrees ; so that according to Mr. Vice Principal they may be almost justified one week, and not quite justified till the next. ——— Sanctification we grant to be a progressive work in the soul, carried on by the Spirit throughout a christian's whole life, by the help of which Spirit he is enabled to *put off the old man*, to *mortify sin in his members*, to *be conformed to Christ both in the likeness of his death, and the likeness of his resurrection* ; to *be renewed in the spirit of his mind*, yea, to *have that mind in him which was also in Christ Jesus* ; to *abound in good works*, and to *grow in grace and holiness*, till he is *made meet to be partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light*.

From these few remarks it appears, that Mr. Allen has been preaching against the articles of the established church, and attacking the grand doctrine of the reformation. See the

matter in a short view, by putting Mr. Allen's words in one column, as opposite as light and darkness, to the church of England in the other column.

Mr. Allen,

Faith in its highest degree, when alone or distinct from other virtues is so far from saving or justifying any person, that it doth not *ne-cessarily* produce good works, p. 8.

In a word faith, of itself doth not justify, p. 9.

It is the leading tenet of modern enthusiasm,

That any one by suddenly believing that Jesus Christ shed his blood for his sins is instantaneously justified,

Or to use their very language, *Only believe, and you are saved.*

Faith as it imports the assent of the mind to any credible proposition, so far as it is credible is a step, another step to our acceptance with God, which will terminate, but not before a sufficient process, and the practice of every human, social, and divine virtue in final justification, p. 14.

The Church of England.

Good works do spring out *ne-cessarily* of a true and lively faith, Art. 12.

We are justified by faith *only*, Art. 11.

It is a most wholesome doctrine and very full of comfort.

That we are accounted righteous before God, *only* for the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and not for our own works or deservings, Art. 11.

He that believeth shall be saved, Mark xvi. 16.

Our imperfection is so great, thro' the corruption of original sin, that all is imperfect that is within us, faith, charity, hope, dread, thoughts, words, and works, and therefore not apt to merit, and deserve any part of our justification for us. The 3d part of the homily on Salvation.

Mr. Allen.

No man can be sure from scripture, that his sins are remitted before he hath fulfilled the *conditions* required in the scriptures for such remission, p. 18.

We ought firmly to believe, that no person can be justified in the sight of God by *faith alone*, as it is strictly taken,

Without the other virtues, which Christ hath required together with it in order to that end, p. 20, 21.

In vain do we talk of being justified without being previously sanctified. p. 25.

The Church of England

The only mean and instrument of salvation required of our parts is *faith*, that is to say, a sure trust and confidence in the mercies of God; whereby we persuade ourselves, that God both hath, and will forgive our sins, that he hath accepted us again into his favour, that he hath released us from the bonds of damnation, and received us again into the number of his elect people, not for our merits, or deserts but **ONLY** and **SOLELY** for the merits of Christ's death and passion. The 2d. part of the homily on the passion.

We put our faith in Christ, that we be justified by him **ONLY**,

That we be justified by God's free mercy, and the merits of our Saviour Christ **ONLY**, and by no *virtue*, or good works of our own that is in us, or that we can be able to have, or to do, for to deserve the same, Christ himself **ONLY** being the cause meritorious thereof. 3d. Part of the homily on Salvation.

We doubt not but works done before justification have in them the nature of sin. Art. 13.

Mr. Allen.

The Church of England.

A Man may have all faith, ordinary and extraordinary, every kind and every degree of faith, and still be at a vast distance from the kingdom of heaven, p. 15.

I can shew a man, that by faith without works lived, and came to heaven; but without faith never man had life. The thief that was hanged, when Christ suffered, did believe only, and the most merciful God justified him. The first part of the homily of good works.

Since then Mr. Allen denies justification to be by faith ONLY. And

The church of England maintains justification to be by faith ONLY in her articles and homilies,

Is he not thereby an open impugner of the articles of religion established in the church of England, and according to the law in this very case made and provided liable to be *excommunicated ipso facto*, and not restored, but only by the archbishop, after his repentance and public revocation of such his wicked errors? See the 5th Cannon. May the Lord give him a repentance not to be repented of, and enable him to make a public revocation of what has been injurious in his sermon to the glory of God, and to the peace of his church. Amen.

F I N I S.